

# Diverting Food from Landfill

## in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region

Published May 2023

Unwanted food often makes its way to our landfills. The most undesirable route for this unwanted product. Sometimes this food could be wanted by someone else. Other times this food can be composted into available nutrients that return value to our soils. In landfills, the food cannot be eaten by people, nor creatures. It costs money and valuable space. It decomposes in a way that releases Methane gas.

Across this Region - people, schools, communities, and regulatory agencies are working hard to implement preferred strategies for unwanted food to provide the highest value.

### HOMES

Diverting food from the trash can is underway in many homes. On smaller lots or apartments, residents may use a worm bin, tumbler, or work together on a shared system. On larger lots, open piles, 3-bin systems, and wire bins are popular. Many learn the practice along with gardening, but more and more households are seeing the value in its own right. Join a community of residents seeking to learn and share knowledge, or just interested to be engage on food diversion efforts. Learn more: <https://forms.gle/ZXhUz2D4iSk8b5p66>

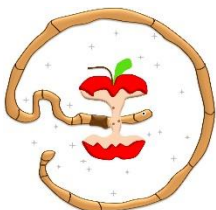
### SCHOOLS

The **Enfield Village School** says “We have been composting at EVS since the fall of 2020. We have worked to educate children about composting food scraps or taking uneaten food home instead of throwing it away. We are hoping to establish a school garden where we can use the compost generated at school.” - Amy Stewart.

We are also aware of food diversion programs at the following elementary schools: Unity Elementary School, Plainfield Elementary School, and Bluff Elementary School in partnership with Winter Street Farm.



Photo 1. EVS student adds food scraps to their on-site tumbler.



**What is YOUR Food Diversion Story? Would you like to have one?**

We would love to celebrate and support you!

Just Contact Olivia at [ouyizeye@uulsrpc.org](mailto:ouyizeye@uulsrpc.org)

## MUNICIPALITIES

In **New London**, a composting pilot program was initiated in late October 2022. By April 15, 2023, the 20 households participating in the program diverted 3 tons of food scraps from the landfill. Renewal Compost collects the food scraps at the Transfer Station and hauls them to a farm in Derry, NH. In 2023, Article 17 of the Town Warrant, sought \$12,000 to expand the Pilot Program to 140 more New London residents; it was unanimously passed on March 28, 2023. Find out more: <https://newlondon.nh.gov/index.asp?SEC=B20D789F-3F7D-434F-995A-561B54CEAC15>



*Photo 2. New London DPW Staff Dave Briggs, Jeff Currier, and Kenny Waldo.*

The **Lebanon** Solid Waste Facility offers a Food Waste Drop-Off Program. Your food scraps will be composted and used onsite for erosion control. This activity helps avoid the use of virgin soil products and has a huge benefit on landfill capacity. Starting in 2023, it is free for households from participating communities! The solid waste permit application is online and FREE for... Participating NH communities include Lebanon, Canaan, Enfield, Grafton, Hanover, Lyme, Newbury, Orange, Orford, and Plainfield. As well as Bridgewater, Fairlee, Hartford, Hartland, Norwich, Pomfret, Sharon, Strafford, Thetford, Vershire, West Fairlee, and Woodstock in VT.

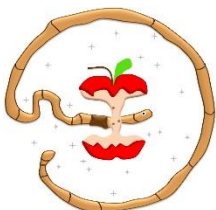
Find out more: <https://lebanonnh.gov/1464/Food-Waste-Drop-Off-Program>

## STATE REGULATORY AGENCIES

The NH Department of Environmental Services adopted **revised rules** for facilities that manage and compost food waste, in effect March 2022. The new rules make it possible for permit-by-notification composting facilities to compost all food scraps, including meat and dairy. The new rules also add two key permit exemptions: one for small-scale food waste drop-off sites and another for community composting facilities. The food waste drop-off exemption allows collection and storage of up to one cubic yard of food waste (equivalent to roughly 40 5-gallon buckets), enabling food co-ops or other community centers to function as collection points without the need for a solid waste facility permit. This exemption could also enable start-up food scrap haulers to develop a distributed network of collection points in rural areas. In addition, the community composting permit-exemption enables a composting facility to process up to 5 cubic yards of food waste per month without needing a solid waste facility permit, allowing community composting operations at a localized scale, such as within a neighborhood or at a community garden.

Learn more about these rules: <https://www.des.nh.gov/waste/solid-waste>

View Webinar on the new rules - <https://www.onfarmcomposting.org/regulations>



A program of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission  
Providing technical assistance on food diversion from landfills  
Funded by the USDA Solid Waste Program  
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